

into the clear and limpid water which
the slight
surf scarcely disturbed. Its
foundations could
be seen seven or eight fathoms below.

To climb along this bastion was
quite im-
possible for it rose perpendicularly.
It would
be necessary to scale the cliff in
order to find
out if the upper plateau displayed a
less arid
surface. Moreover, if they had to
abandon the
idea of climbing this bastion it meant
that they
could only get round it by means of
the boat.
The matter of present urgency,
however, was
to look for some cavity in the cliff
wherein they
could take shelter.

So all went up to the top of the beach,
along the
base of the bastion.

When they reached the corner of the
cliff, they
came upon thick layers of sea-weeds,
absolutely
dry. As the last water-marks of the
high tide
were visible more than two hundred
yards lower
down, this meant—the steep pitch of
the shore
being taken into account—that these
plants had
been thrown up so far, not by the sea,
but ,by the
winds from the south, which are very
violent in
these waters.

" If we were obliged to spend the
winter here,"
Fritz remarked, " these sea-weeds
would supply
us with fuel for a long time, if we could
not find
any wood."
" Fuel that burns fast," the
boatswain added.